

Could Malignaggi Beat Hatton?

Written by Michael Woods

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Paul Malignaggi hasn't shown himself to be fearful in the ring, and lord knows he's not afraid to let his thoughts fly either. The mouthy Brooklynier, who turns 28 on Nov. 23rd, is counting down to a Nov. 22 date with Ricky Hatton, a bout that will unfold in Las Vegas, at the MGM Grand. Malignaggi's getting his body primed for the encounter, but his mouth seems to be in tip-top form. Hatton is the favorite, but he turns 31 on Oct.6, and has weathered much wear and tear since turning professional in 1997. If he loses to Malignaggi, Hatton has said, he will hang up the gloves. Here's Malignaggi (25-1, 5 KOs) spouting on IBO junior welterweight champion Hatton (44-1, 31 KOs), Floyd Mayweather Sr., and what he'll do if and when he beats Hatton.

Paulie On His IBF Title:

"I'm very disappointed to give up my title. I did my best to win it and was very proud to wear it. I've never heard of the same boxer being the mandatory twice within the same year. I worked hard to get that title, but I was committed to fighting Hatton. Me and Ricky are the top two 140-pounders and we're fighting to see who is No. 1. We could have asked for an exception requiring the winner to fight Ngoudjo next, but neither of us (Malignaggi and Hatton) would agree, so we let the IBF title go and allowed two guys we've already beaten fight for it while we take care of our business. We did Ngoudjo and Urango a favor by not asking for the exception and making them wait another six months to fight. I wish them the best of luck. This is the biggest fight of my career, IBF title or no title. I'm going to show the world that Paulie Malignaggi is the No. 1 light welterweight in the world."

Paulie On Hatton's New Trainer:

"Floyd Mayweather, Sr. is putting himself in a tough situation and putting a lot of pressure on Hatton. You can't teach dogs new tricks. He can teach him a few things in two months, but Hatton doesn't have the talent – natural speed and defensive ability. Mayweather's been opening his mouth and when I beat Hatton, everybody is going to say he shouldn't have gotten rid of his trainer (Billy Graham) and blame Mayweather. When they lose it's going to cost Mayweather a lot of jobs."

Paulie On His Training Camp:

"I trained in the Poconos for a while. In between the press conferences (Las Vegas and London) I worked at Gleason's (in Brooklyn). We moved camp last week to Las Vegas for a lot of reasons. I wanted to get used to West Coast time and there are plenty of good fighters in Vegas for sparring. I spar against different styles of fighters to stay sharp. I started sparring in the Poconos and everything has been good."

Paulie On His Right Hand:

"It's fine. I've been hitting hard. Everybody's going to find out how good my hand is, especially Ricky Hatton."

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Paulie On Ricky Hatton:

“I’m confident in myself with the experience I’ve gained. I don’t worry about Hatton, his personal life or his change in trainers. I concentrate on being the best Paulie Malignaggi as possible.”

Paulie On The Fight:

“I’m focused on Ricky Hatton, not (Oscar) De La Hoya or (Manny) Pacquiao (Hatton has talked about fighting the De La Hoya-Pacquiao winner after Malignaggi). It’s going to be a very frustrating night for Ricky Hatton. He’ll be catching a lot. I’ll prove that Paulie Malignaggi is the No. 1 140-pounder in the world.”